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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/MLS (SCHEIBE); NSC FOR ELIZABETH PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/19/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [BM](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: POLAND: BURMA SANCTIONS SHOULD BE BETTER TARGETED

REF: STATE 33547

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR DAN SAINZ FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)
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¶1. (C) The Polish MFA supports the concept of "better-targeted" U.S. and EU sanctions against Burma and strengthening diplomatic engagement with the regime. On April 17, Danuta Bolimowska, First Counselor at the MFA's Africa-Pacific Department, told us that she was encouraged by the U.S. review of its policy towards Burma, because the current EU and U.S. policies of isolating Burma have failed to "bring the results we desired." While the MFA recognizes it would be inappropriate to lift all sanctions against Burma immediately, it seeks a "smarter, more targeted approach" that causes "less harm to the people we're trying to help."

¶2. (C) At the same time, Bolimowska asserted the EU should step up direct diplomatic engagement with Rangoon and try to persuade China and ASEAN nations to play a more active and constructive role in Burma. She argued that the EU has limited leverage, but Burma's neighbors have the opportunity to exert more influence through their proximity and economic relationships.

¶3. (C) Turning to the UN, Bolimowska said that oppositionists in Burma told her they are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the performance of UN Special Envoy to Burma Ibrahim Gambari, whom she repeatedly described as "ineffective"--despite his many visits to Burma--and lacking respect, even among those in government. Bolimowska asserted that Gambari appears to appease the regime in Burma at the expense of human rights. She emphasized that while Poland fully supports the activities of the UN Secretary General, she personally believed that Gambari's effectiveness as a UN envoy should be reviewed.

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